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ABSTRACT

The 3-year Title III elementary school project provided an individualized program for the 310 attending students to assess effectiveness of educating the 15% of the mildly handicapped mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled students in a common school setting. Two trainer consultants, five teachers, 15 interns in training as well as instructional aides and community volunteers participated. Equipment such as tape recorders and language masters were used. The program specified objectives such as appropriate grade level gains by identified handicapped children (HC) to equal or exceed gains of a control group. The HC were identified through diagnostic tests, and were evaluated daily by behavioral rating measures. Results indicated no differences between gains of the HC and gains of the control group (students in another school receiving help in a resource room) for the first year, gains equal to gains of the control group during the second year, and gains equal to or greater than the total grade level group for grades 3, 5, and 6 in reading, and for grade 6 in mathematics during the third year. The results supported the hypothesis that mildly handicapped children in the same setting as normal peers could be educated with as much effectiveness as students who were given extra assistance away from the regular class. (MC)

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HANDICAPPED & NORMAL CHILDREN

LEARNING TOGETHER

The Brigadoon Project, ESEA Title III

Summary of Project
1970 - 1973

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HANDICAPPED AND NORMAL CHILDREN LEARNING TOGETHER

Summary of Project

I. Introduction

The Brigadoon project was designed to provide an individualized program for every elementary age child residing within the school attendance area with performance levels ranging from those of mildly handicapped to gifted. There are no segregated placements for special academic needs. All children are educated together. There are 310 pupils in the attendance area with about 15% of these identified as children who would be the recipients of special services in other educational settings.

The program employs the following educational concepts:

1. Individual instruction
2. Continuous progress
3. Continuous assessment
4. Contingency management
5. Differentiated staff.
   a. Curriculum specialists
   b. Teachers
   c. Teacher-trainees
   d. Paid aides
   e. Mother-aides from pre-school

II. Project Description

A. Overview of Project

1. Within special education there is growing recognition of the need to develop programs to allow mildly handicapped children to be served with their more normal peers. Traditionally, members of this minority group have been classified with labels such as "educable mentally retarded" and grouped together as such in segregated settings. Research indicates that mildly handicapped achieve as well or better in the regular classroom than in segregated homogeneous groupings. The stigma of special

placement often results in emotional problems and lower achievement. In addition, many pupils never receive needed special help because of the stigma of special consideration or for one reason or another they are not perceived as a problem and not referred.

Recently a new category of handicapped called "Specific Learning and Language Disabilities" has come into focus. Estimates of incidence range from 3% to 30% of the population. Existing segregated programs cannot possibly cope with these numbers of children.

It is clearly evident however, that simply placing the mildly handicapped child in the regular classroom will not suffice. A systematic effort must be made to meet his individual behavioral needs in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains while he is in contact with his normal peers.

Current funding for the excess needs of handicapped children is generally contingent upon the identification of the population to be served with specific patterns of services allowed. Seldom if ever is there any overlapping of services permitted between the handicapped and normal populations. Resources to support a joint program would have to be from outside the regular sources.

2. The general purpose of the project was to provide a common school setting where-in pupils with educational needs ranging from mildly handicapped (educable mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, etc.) could be effectively served with their more normal peers. To accomplish this, a number of educational practices and concepts found valid in other settings would be employed in a unique combination. These practices included: individualized instruction where-in each pupil would

work at his own performance level and progress at his own rate; continuous assessment, to provide the basis for program decisions with respect to each pupils' progress; and staff differentiation for optimal use of available resources.

3. Brigadoon, the school selected for the project was built to accomodate 600 pupils. During the program however the enrollment ranged from 280 to 310 pupils. The resulting extra space was well utilized. It is an open concept setting which facilitated the sharing of materials and equipment across grade level.

   The school serves kindergarten through sixth grade pupils. The population in the project included all of the pupils in the attendance area with performance levels and academic needs ranging from those of the mildly handicapped to the gifted.

   The differentiated staff included an administrator, 2 and 1/2 trainer consultants, 5 staff teachers, 15 interns in training, instructional aides (about 48 hrs/day) and community volunteers. The trainer consultants developed the specific tactics to be employed in the projects and trained the staff in a six week summer workshop and inservice sessions during the school year. The trainer consultants had extensive training and experience in special education. The staff teachers had no special training or certification.

   The interns were college undergraduates majoring in elementary education. They began their specific training with the six week summer workshop and in a carefully controlled process throughout the school year were systematically phased into instructional responsibilities.

In the development of the individualized curriculum care was taken to see that a wide variety of programs were available in order to meet diverse needs. Many many individual work sheets and materials were developed and made available for direct use by the pupils which greatly facilitated individual programming. In this endeavor an offset press proved to be an essential component. Equipment such as tape recorders, language masters, etc. were used to facilitate individualization through independent pupil endeavor.

B. Objectives and Activities

1. a. Children identified as mildly handicapped will receive education programming appropriate to their performace levels in the same setting with non-handicapped peers.

   1) Children identified as mildly handicapped will, by grade level grouping, maintain an academic acquisition rate in equal proportion to the total grade level group.

   2) All identified mildly handicapped children will be maintained socially in the project's academic setting.

   3) Grade level gains by identified handicapped children in the Project will equal or exceed those of a control group as determined by pre-post standardized measures.

   b. All children in the Brigadoon Project will receive an individualized program in basic skill development subjects: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics and Physical Education.

   1) Grade level means will show a gain of at least one grade level over the project year as shown on pre-post standardized measures.

   2) Individualized instruction will result in an increased range of performance levels as shown by quartile distribution within grade levels.

3) Project pupils will show greater grade-levels gains than those of a control school as measured on pre-post standardized measures.

2. a. In the spring, teacher-trainees (interns) were interviewed and selected for the program training model. A summer workshop was held to bring them to a functional level for fall activities. This constituted the first of a three-phase teacher training program.

b. With fall registration, each pupil was given informal diagnostic measures to determine performance level with respect to curriculum materials used in the project. All materials were organized into assignable units for ease in individualization and assessment. Children were placed in the curriculum at a point that enabled them to function with increasing independence, as contract format was used to manage individual programs. This provided a call for daily assignments as well as a permanent direct record of work completed.

c. Continuous assessment of pupil performance began with the initial informal measure. This served to validate the initial assignment and provide formative data in planning subsequent assignments and performance expectations. Criterion measures were also taken as each child completed an assigned portion of the curriculum. Behavior rate measures were taken daily as a sensitive indication of change. These measures were summarized at four (4) week intervals to provide supervisory as well as program evaluation information.

d. Each pupil was assigned to a small instructional group under one teacher-trainee. This was the beginning of the second phase of the teacher training program. At this point a certificated teacher had full responsibility for academic instruction; while the teacher-trainees monitored pupil performance, and planned and executed non-academic activities. Teacher-trainees moved into the third phase as they de-

monstrated competencies. Eventually they planned and executed all instructional activities under the close supervision of certificated staff.

e. A cooperative preschool provided consistent daily volunteers in the form of mothers who were willing to serve in the regular K-6 program in return for their childs participation.

3. The systematic approach to individualized programming with some contingency management prompted a consistent response from the children as reported by visitors: "I know what to do, I know when I've done it, and I have something to do as a result."

C. Evidence of Effectiveness

1. a. A pre-post standardized measure was given to all pupils in the Brigadoon Project and pupils in a control group to note grade level change.

b. The four-week summaries of the continuous assessment contained the following information:

1) Performance level in the curriculum material employed.

2) Performance levels of behaviors measured daily and the rate at which these behaviors changed.

2. The first year of the project the Iowa Test of Basic Skills was used as a pre-post measure. Standard statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in grade level gains between Brigadoon pupils and those of a comparison school similar in size and make up to Brigadoon. The basic difference between the two schools is that the second school has a learning center into which mildly handicapped children are programmed for up to 2 hours per day.

The second year the Wide Range Achievement Test was used as the pre-post measure. The following table shows median grade level gains of the identified handicapped in Brigadoon and the control school in Reading.

Grade	Brigadoon		Control	
*1		(N-7)		(N-4)
2	+.8	(N-11)	+.3	(N-11)
3	+.3	(N-13)	+.3	(N-6)
4	+.6	(N-8)	+.7	(N-9)
5	+.6	(N-9)	+.8	(N-11)
6	+1.4	(N-4)	- .25	(N-7)

Each handicapped group had greater measured median grade equivalent gain at two grade levels with one grade level equal. Brigadoon's handicapped appear to be progressing at least as well in the integrated setting as those handicapped receiving help in a resource room.

The third year the Wide Range Achievement was again used as the pre-post measure. With respect to the specific objectives:

a. Mildly handicapped children will maintain an academic acquisition rate in equal proportion to the total grade level group.

Mean Grade Level Gains

Grade	Reading		Spelling		Math	
	All	hc	All	hc	All	hc
2	1.23	1.1	1.39	.8	.15	1.0
3	1.09	1.3	1.95	1.0	.09	.6
4	1.01	.7	.97	.5	.73	1.0
5	.88	1.5	.88	.6	1.00	1.0
6	.51	1.0	-.26	.9	.79	.5

The identified handicapped (hc) gain equaled or exceeded the total grade level group in grades 3, 5 and 6 in reading; grade 6 in math.

*The initial measure was the Metropoliton Reading Readiness test.

In these areas the objective was met, in the remaining areas it was not.

b. All identified mildly handicapped children will be maintained socially in the Projects' academic setting.

No child was excluded from the program.

c. Grade level gains by identified handicapped in the project will equal or exceed those of a control group as determined by pre-post standardized measures.

Distribution of 1972-73 mean grade equivalent gains of identified mildly handicapped children in Brigadoon and control group.

	Reading		Spelling		Math	
	Brig.	Cont.	Brig.	Cont.	Brig.	Cont.
N	23	15	23	14	23	14
Mdn	1.0	.60	.70	.60	.60	1.0
M	1.09	.81	.73	.66	.70	1.28
SD	.75	.78	.57	.76	.60	.86

As shown Brigadoon mildly handicapped showed greater grade level gains in reading and spelling while the control group showed greater gains in math.

d. Grade level means will show a gain of at least one grade level over the project year as shown on pre-post standardized measures.

Mean Gains

Grade	Reading	Spelling	Math
2	1.23	1.39	.15
3	1.09	1.95	.09
4	1.01	.97	.73
5	.88	.88	1.00
6	.51	-.26	.79

Grade level gains equal or exceed one year in 6 of 15 areas with reading the strongest area and math the weakest.

e. Individualized instruction will result in an increased range of performance levels as shown by quartle distribution within grade levels. There was an increase in 1st to 3rd quartile distribution at all grade levels in reading and spelling and in grades 3 and 4 in math.

f. Project pupils will show greater grade level gains than those of a control school as measured on pre-post standardized measures.

By mean distribution Brigadoon showed greater gain in one grade level in reading, two grade levels in spelling and one grade level in math. By median distribution Brigadoon shows greater gain in two grade levels in reading, three grade levels in spelling, three grade levels in math with two grade levels equal.

Over all these results indicate that mildly handicapped children can be educated in the same setting as their normal peers with as much effectiveness as another program providing them with specialized extra assistance apart from the total group.

D. Costs

The initiation and developmental costs are indicated in the level of funding for the first two years. The third year expenditure of 49,665 is closer to operational cost and with 310 pupils results in a per pupil cost of $160.21.

E. Publications and Materials

No publications are available

F. Exportability Factors

On the basis of dissemination activities already undertaken, the following steps are recommended:

1. Workshop to train staff in:
   a. Organization of available curriculum materials into assignable units relating to specific goals
   b. Classroom curricular management techniques
   c. Development and use of informal diagnostic measures and continuous assessment
2. Time and resources necessary to implement steps covered in the workshop
3. Site visitation to provide ongoing assistance in implementation.

III. Descriptive Data

A. Major Area of Concern: Special Education

B. Project Title: Handicapped & Normal Children Learning Together

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E. Level of Funding:

Initial Grant	$ 91,844	Date June 15, 1970 - July 15, 1971
1st Continuation	$ 75,000	Date July 16, 1971 - July 31, 1972
2nd Continuation	$ 49,665	Date August 1, 1972-August 31,1973
3rd Continuation	$ 27,666	Date September 1,1973-June 30,1974
Total	$ 244,175	